

The following Listing of Claims replaces all prior listings, and versions, of claims in the subject patent application.

Listing of Claims:

1 (currently amended): A sausage-producing device (1) comprising in combination a stuffing unit (16) with a charging pipe (3) for stuffing sausage skins, a length-dimensioning unit (5) for controlled removal of the stuffed sausage skins, said length-dimensioning unit having two conveying belts (6a, 6b) the distance and speed thereof being adjustable to form a specific sausage shape and length, wherein by adjusting the removal rate of the length-dimensioning unit during sausage stuffing, relative to the stuffing material ejection rate, the length of the individual sausages can be determined, and a clip module (8) for closing the stuffed sausage skins arranged directly after said length-dimensioning unit (5) when seen in the direction of transport of the stuffed sausage skins with all produced sausages having the same shape and volume, and wherein a control means (7) is provided to synchronize the functions of the stuffing unit, the clip module, and the length-dimensioning unit.

2 (previously amended): A device according to claim 1, wherein said charging pipe (3) has associated therewith a twist-off unit (4).

3 (previously amended): A device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said clip module (8) includes a cutter.

4 (previously amended): A device according to claim 1, wherein said clip module (8) includes a loop former.

5 (previously amended): A device according to claim 1, wherein, when seen in the direction of transport of the stuffed sausage skins, said clip module (8) is followed by a transfer unit (12).

6 (previously amended): A device according to claim 5, wherein, when seen in the direction of transport of the stuffed sausage skins, said transfer unit (12) is followed by a conveyor belt.

7 (previously amended): A device according to claim 5, wherein, when seen in the direction of transport of the stuffed sausage skins, said transfer unit (12) is followed by a suspension unit (10).

8 (canceled).

9 (previously amended): A device according to claim 1, wherein a transfer unit (12) and a conveyor belt are connected to said control means for the sausage-producing device via control lines so as to synchronize the functions of said transfer unit and said conveyor belt with the functions of said stuffing unit (16), said length-dimensioning unit (5) and said clip module (8).

10 (currently amended): A method of producing sausages comprising the steps of stuffing sausage skins via a charging pipe (3), transporting the stuffed sausage skins away in a controlled manner via a length-dimensioning unit (5), said length-dimensioning unit having two conveying belts (6a, 6b) the distance and speed thereof being adjusted to form a specific sausage shape and length, wherein by adjusting the removal rate of the length-dimensioning unit during sausage stuffing, relative to the stuffing material ejection rate, the length of the individual sausages can be determined, and closing the stuffed sausage skins by a clip module (8) directly after the length-dimensioning unit (5) such that all produced sausages have the same shape and volume, and synchronizing the functions of the stuffing unit, the clip module, and the length-dimensioning unit.

11 (previously amended): A method according to claim 10, and twisting the sausage skins off after stuffing and before they are transported away via the length-dimensioning unit (5).

12 (canceled).

13 (previously amended): A method according to claim 10, and closing the stuffed sausage skins with the clip module (8) at two juxtaposed points.

14 (previously amended): A method according to claim 13, and cutting through the stuffed sausage skins with the clip module (8) between these two points.

15 (previously amended): A method according to claim 14, and said step of cutting through is effected after each n-th closure, where n is a selected integer, so as to obtain chains of sausages which comprise a specific number of sausages corresponding to the selected integer n.

16 (previously amended): A method according to claim 11, and closing the stuffed sausage skins by the clip module (8) twice at the twist-off point.

17 (previously amended): A method according to claim 10, and advancing the stuffed sausage skins, which have been closed by the clip module (8), to a transfer unit (12).

18 (previously amended): A method according to claim 17, and, when seen in the direction of transport, transferring the stuffed sausage skins to a conveyor belt after the transfer unit (12).

19 (previously amended): A method according to claim 17, and causing the functions of the clip module (18) to take place in synchronism with the functions of the length-dimensioning unit and the transfer unit.

20 (canceled).

21 (previously amended): A device according to claim 1, wherein a transfer unit (12) and a suspension unit are connected to said control means for the sausage-producing device via control lines so as to synchronize the functions of said transfer unit (12) and said suspension unit with the functions of said stuffing unit (16), said length-dimensioning unit (5) and said clip module (8).

22 (previously amended): A method according to claim 17, and, when seen in the direction of transport, transferring the stuffed sausage skins to a suspension unit after the transfer unit (12).